

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 1919, INCLUDING REPORT OF A COM-
MITTEE MEETING HELD IN NEW YORK CITY, TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1919.

The first meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1920 was held in its offices at 1729 New York Avenue, northwest, Washington, D. C., on Wednesday, August 20, 1919.

The following members were present:

Mr. Moore, Chairman;

Mr. Adams;

Mr. Platt;

Mr. Kendall;

Mr. Pope;

also Colonel Ridley, Secretary and Executive Officer.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PRECEDING MEETING. The minutes of the preceding meeting held in Washington on June 6 last, and of a committee meeting held in New York City on July 2, 1919, were approved.

2. RESOLUTION IN RE ALLOTMENTS. Upon motion duly made and seconded the following resolution was passed:

"RESOLVED, That, to conform with the requirements of Section 3679 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, the funds appropriated for the Commission of Fine Arts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1920, be made available at any time during the year and that no special allotments by quarters be made."

3. VICTORY MEDAL. Mr. Adams reported that a Committee Meeting at Mr. Fraser's studio August 19, at which he, Mr. Moore, Mr. Platt and Mr. Kendall, were present to inspect the progress made on the Victory Medal, it was voted to have a fac-simile medal electrotyped from the plaster model, the exact size of the final work, with the ring, ribbon and bars attached, for

the War Department. The expense of the sample is not to be included in Mr. Fraser's compensation(\$1500) for design and dies. (The appropriation of the War Department of \$3000 was to allow for such contingencies as this). The report was accepted.

4. CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR, U. S. A. Mr. Adams reported also on behalf of his Committee that they had inspected models for the Congressional Medal of Honor at Mr. Paul Manship's studio, on August 19th. It was agreed that the work had arrived at such a stage where it was necessary to have a metal model made, at actual size. The committee recommended that the Secretary of War be asked to make an allowance of \$500 for making this reduction.

Colonel Wyllie of the General Staff was present at the Commission meeting during the discussion, and advised in the matter, as well as on the Victory Medal.

5. COLLAR ORNAMENTS, U. S. A. The Commission having received two cartons of collar ornaments, one for officers and the other for enlisted men, they were referred to Mr. Adams as a Committee for review. He reported that he had a conference with Major Clark (representing Colonel Ellison of the Clothing and Equipage Division) and Colonel Wyllie of the General Staff. Inasmuch as it developed in this conference that the General Staff is considering an entirely new system of designating the different arms of the service and regiments, it was decided not to take up the matter of redesigning the present insignia until after that question had been settled by the General Staff.

6. BRONZE TABLET FOR THE FOREST SERVICE. Mr. Witherow, representing the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, submitted a revised design for a bronze memorial tablet to those of the Forest Service who died in the Great War. He was advised that to produce a naturalistic background in relief was so difficult, as to make an attempt, with the means available, hopeless.

The best thing, therefore, was a well-designed tablet, suited to the location to be occupied, omitting the pictorial element. It was understood that Mr. Witherow would ask the Tiffany people to submit a new design for a tablet much simplified, leaving out the suggestion of the forest and the eagle; the tablet to bear the names, inscription, and the Forest Service symbol, with a simple architectural border. Furthermore, since the Forest Service has as yet no permanent place for the Tablet the "light and dark" features would be eliminated.

7. ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL. After the meeting in New York City on July 2, Mr. Moore consulted Mrs. Roosevelt about the objections to placing the Memorial as designed in Rock Creek Park: namely, that it would introduce formal elements into an informal park and would be the beginning of movements to place various memorials in that area. Mrs. Roosevelt appreciated the situation; she said that she had not considered the architectural features or the plans connected with the Memorial, but had considered only the figure of the lion; that she felt quite as strongly as do the Commission that there should be no intrusion of Rock Creek Park by any Memorial that would change the essential character of the park. She suggested that the Memorial might go in the parkway, where it would be supported on either side by buildings and therefore would involve no intrusion.

Mrs. Roosevelt further stated she did not favor any Memorial that would seem to place President Roosevelt in a prominent position in relation to the plan of Washington. She said that he had always felt and she had also felt that Washington was the city of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln and that lesser persons should be commemorated in relation to the plan of Washington only after time had shown their right to such commemoration.

The Commission agreed that the sculptor and the architect should be told that any suggestion they might make for placing the Memorial in the parkway would receive the consideration of the Commission.

8. CAPITOL FRIEZE. On receiving a letter (Exhibit A) from Senator Phelan, calling attention to work being done in the Capitol in the way of restoring the Brumidi decorations, the Chairman said he went with the Senator to look at the frieze in the Rotunda that is receiving the attention of a painter. Senator Phelan was furnished with a copy of the report of the Commission made to the House Committee on the Library, and printed as Report No. 1139, 65th Congress, 3d Session, Frieze in Rotunda of Capitol. Senator Phelan stated the work that is being done was not satisfactory and that he would follow up the matter.

9. MEMORIAL PLACQUE FOR SOLDIERS WHO DIED ABROAD. Under date of July 26, 1919, the Commission received a communication from the War Department, asking for recommendations concerning memorial plaques for our soldiers who died abroad. The matter was referred to Mr. Adams, who recommended to the Department that individual plaques be presented to the nearest of kin of the soldiers.

10. AMERICAN CEMETERIES IN FRANCE. The Chairman reported having received a letter dated Paris, July 22, 1919, from Commissioner Henry White (Exhibit B) as to the retention in France of the bodies of American soldiers. Mr. White expressed himself as strongly in favor of such retention, and said he would use efforts to have the removal stopped by the French authorities for sanitary reasons, in case pressure became strong. Mr. White wrote that "if the American Cemetery at Suresnes is any criterion of cemeteries of our soldiers in France, they are being planned from a landscape point of view and regulated so as to

prevent the intrusion of private monuments. The cemetery in question is immediately under the ramparts of the Fortress of Mont Valerien, and the graves are marked by crosses, in perfectly regular rows. It will ere long be a beautiful, as it is already a touching spot and place of pilgrimage for our country people." On August 15 the Chairman, in behalf of the Commission had the War Department cable Brigadier General W. W. Harts at Paris to secure six or eight photographs of the cemetery at Suresnes.

11. CERTIFICATE FOR WOUNDED MEN, U. S.A. Colonel Wyllie advised the Commission that the War Department has placed an order for the Certificate for the Wounded with the Manhattan Photogravure Company, with a specific provision that the prints must be presented to Mr. Blashfield for his approval before acceptance.

12. NAVY PLACQUE. Commander Mayo advised the Commission under date of August 8, 1919, that he has not had time to take up further the Navy Plaque proposition, but desires to do so as soon as possible. He will also try to see Mr. Weinman the next time he is in New York.

13. SUCCESSOR TO MR. ADAMS. The four-year term of Mr. Herbert Adams as a member of the Commission of Fine Arts having expired June 15, 1919, the Commission took into consideration the question of appointment of his successor. After discussion, the matter went over till the next meeting.

14. ARLINGTON FARMS. The Commission visited the Arlington Farms. They found new barns in course of construction, as noted by Senator Phelan in the Senate on August 13. The barns present a disorderly array of buildings, which should be planted out. The scheme for a new group of buildings as approved by the Commission has not yet been entered upon.

15. THE CAPITOL GROUNDS AT MONTEPELIER. The Governor of Vermont having advised the Commission of his desire to have advice as to the improvement of

the Vermont Capitol grounds at Montpelier, it was agreed that a Committee representing the Commission would visit Montpelier regarding this matter, within the next month. (Exhibit C).

16. DESIGN FOR FREE BATH HOUSE AND NEW ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, at HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS. Mr. A. B. Cammerer, Acting Director of the National Park Service of the Interior Department, laid before the Commission elevations showing the design of a new Administration Building at Hot Springs, Arkansas, and for a new Free Public Bath House at that place. The Commission considered the design of the Administration Building simple and dignified and recommended its approval. The design of the Free Public Bath House should be simplified and the architect should consider the substitution of square towers for the round cupolas shown on the two small structures flanking each side of the main entrance and immediately below the cooling tower.

17. PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD BRIDGE. Mr. Pope submitted a drawing showing a design of the tower which would meet with the approval of the Commission if submitted as a part of the bridge design. The Commission ordered the drawing to be brought to the attention of Colonel Tyler of the United States Engineer's Office, to be forwarded by him to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, with a view to having it incorporated in their plan of the bridge.

18. LINCOLN MEMORIAL INSCRIPTIONS. The Secretary submitted a letter from Mr. Henry Bacon, dated August 18, 1919, with which he transmitted a copy of a memorandum sent to him by Judge Henry B. Rankin, together with two versions of the "Farewell Address" delivered by Lincoln on the occasion of his leaving Springfield for Washington, the first version being by Judge Rankin, the other copied from Nicolay & Hay's "History of Abraham Lincoln". (Exhibit D).

Mr. Bacon's proposition to inscribe the "Springfield Address" on one side of

the pedestal of the Lincoln statue and Lincoln's letter to Mrs. Bixby on the other were considered. The Commission thought neither should be used. The Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural have taken rank among the classics of the English language. The Springfield address and the Bixby letter have not come into that category, and therefore should not be admitted. The Memorial is as near perfect as it can be made, and should be left.

19. MERIDIAN HILL PARK. Submission, Model of Cascade and Lower Garden.

1. Of alternative schemes submitted, the Commission approved--
Low coping along pools with platform and next succeeding pool at same level;
Superimposed rather than stepped basins;
Placing of gutter away from wall;
General location and deep recessing of seats;
Widened niche in terrace wall;
Double basin at niche and lowered top pool;
Simpler treatment of top pool enclosure (omitting dolphin, etc).
Recessed treatment of cross axis with seats;
Revised treatment cascade terminus with lateral service ways;
Wider receiving basin;
Lower seat motif across garden, with pots instead of hermes and broken seats instead of continuous seat;
Freestanding orange trees in wooden boxes instead of pots on coping.
2. The Commission proposed,--
Expansion of landing at top of cascade, with high coping;
(tentative revision on model approved by Mr. Platt)
Restudy of lower garden pools to connect up with cascade;
(tentative revision on model criticised; proposed that level of lower-main-basin be dropped fifteen inches below grade to overcome raft-appearance of cross-walk.
New plans to be submitted.)
3. On special points raised, the Commission decided that,--
The general scheme for treatment of terrace face was satisfactory;
The music pavilion should not be redesigned or moved to correct relations with cascade scheme but that terrace elms should be carried across central part to isolate it.
4. On Mr. Vitale's recommendation, it was decided to treat four quarters of hillside similarly, with border planting and semi-shaded interiors (isolated specimens); with vistas and access on lines of seats against terrace ramps; retaining but enlarging hillside theatre area.

(Note: Planting along cascade was checked over in detail with Mr. Vitale who urged completion of model for further study and

exhibition. Mr. Henlock was sent for to meet Mr. Vitale and discuss two or three items which he regarded as doubtful. Mr. Vitale would like final plans of Buchanan Memorial for his drawings--which will be deferred until final action by Commission).

5. On submission of new walk samples at site, Commission decided that general character of work was good but that blue was too prominent; suggested introduction of small color element; did not think difference between two samples worth any extra cost in grading selected material.
6. Major portion of project is now ready for preparation of detailed drawings. Portion to be restudied are now under way. Model and sketches will be prepared for early submission to Commission or Committee.

20. ZERO MILE-STONE. ELLIPSE. The Commission inspected the model at the site and sketches prepared for development. They preferred the present scheme of a flat map to a suggested alternative using the actual section of a sphere. The proposed location between the walk and curb with double walk crossing toward the White House was approved. It was recommended that the size be increased to approximately the size of the "cage" which now encloses the model,-- possibly subject to the limitations of view of the map on the top or shifting it to the side.

After a short interval for lunch the Commission proceeded to Meridian Hill, the Lincoln Memorial, Potomac Park, Arlington Farms, Arlington Cemetery, the Field House, the Tidal Basin, the Zero Mile-Stone, then to Soldiers' Home, and considered particular features of interest at each of these places.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the Commission adjourned, subject to the call of the Chairman.

Colonel, U.S.A.,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Approved: _____
Chairman.

COPY

UNITED STATES SENATE
Washington, D.C.

August 13, 1919.

Mr. Charles Moore, President,
Commission of Fine Arts,
1729 New York Avenue, N. W.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Moore:-

I desire to direct your attention to the work that is being done in the Capitol, which is fraught, I think, with more or less danger unless committed to very skillful hands. The mural paintings and frescoings on the dining room floor of the Senate, in the neighborhood of the rooms of the Committee on Appropriations, are being retouched. I have spoken to the artist who says that he is capable and that he realizes it to be a very delicate and difficult task.

The paneling and the back-grounds have been gone over, which, doubtless, was necessary for preservation and the appearance of cleanliness, but it appears to me that the finer work stands a great chance of being injured by this method and is in great danger of having its value permanently injured.

I introduced a resolution this morning, which will come up tomorrow, asking that the Secretary of Agriculture discontinue the construction of unsightly buildings and remove these that are there. Senator Brandegee, Chairman of the Library Committee, was not in the Chamber, so I let the resolution go over until tomorrow, and I have since spoken to him. He seems highly sympathetic and said he would take a look at it and seek an interview with you. I think you can get the Senator to help out in the matter of adornment.

Yours very truly,

(signed) James D. Phelan.

EXHIBIT A

COPY

Commissioner Plenipotentiary
of the United States of America.

Paris 22 July 1919.

My dear Mr. Moore:-

Your letter of the 5th ulto. has been shamefully neglected, and I hereby send you all possible apologies.

I am entirely in sympathy with your view as to the retention in their graves of bodies of American soldiers killed in Europe during the late war.

The matter has not come before me in any official way, nor, indeed, has any member of the French Government spoken to me on the subject. I need scarcely say, that if anyone in authority does mention it to me, I shall suggest that objection be made on sanitary grounds for the removal of the bodies.

I may add that if the American Cemetery at Suresnes is any criterion of cemeteries of our soldiers in France, they are being planned from a landscape point of view and regulated so as to prevent the intrusion of private monuments. The cemetery in question is immediately under the ramparts of the Fortress of Mont Valerien, and the graves are marked by crosses, in perfectly regular rows. It will ere long be a beautiful, as it is already a touching spot and place of pilgrimage for our country people.

I hope you are well and that I may have the pleasure of seeing you before very long.

Yours very sincerely,

(signed) Henry White.

Charles Moore, Esq.,
Chairman, The Commission of Fine Arts,
1729 New York Avenue,
Washington, D. C.

XHIBIT B

COPY

STATE OF VERMONT
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
Montpelier

August 14, 1919.

Charles Moore, Chairman,
The Commission of Fine Arts,
1729 New York Avenue,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:-

I have your letter of August 11, and thank you very much for your attention.

I shall be pleased to confer with any members of your commission who may be able to come here, as suggested in your letter. I would request that advice be sent to my office in Montpelier, a few days in advance of the visit of members of the Commission, as I want to be sure to meet them when they come.

Very truly yours,

(signed) Percival W. Clement,

Governor.

EXHIBIT C.

COPY

MEMORANDUM.

I wish to call your attention to the two copies of Lincoln's Farewell Address delivered at Springfield, Ill., Feb. 11th, 1861, herewith attached. I have had these copies typewritten in parallel columns, with corresponding lines opposite each other. The differences in words, the omission of one or more words of one copy differing with the other, are marked by red lines, or blank spaces, to make comparisons easy and vivid. Verification of the address as quoted, can be made by reference to the vols. and pages noted at top of each copy.

There are more than a dozen versions of this Address, but I cite only these two as being the most likely to receive the addition of a final selection by the Memorial Commission because of the historical verification they have had and the recognition for accuracy they have received.

I very much regret that I am the only living person who heard this address and who immediately thereafter took it down in the form it is here presented to you for your consideration and choice.

There has never been any question of difference of opinion about the words or phrasing of Lincoln's Gettysburg speech. That was recorded by skilled reporters and all the copies agree. Very different was the report of the Springfield address. The Reporters' short-hand notes I saw at that time, and I believe I had access to all of them, showed an incomplete record of Lincoln's words. At that time I had only made sufficient progress in stenography to read copy, but had never "taken down" a public speaker. Only a few catch words were recorded by reporters in their note books until Lincoln began the fourth sentence, from the fifth they followed him closer, and after that on to the close. I was able to reconstruct from their notes most confidently, all his sentences. This text so collated was submitted for careful comparison by several of the most intimate friends of Lincoln who were present and who were familiar with Lincoln's style of thought. This resulted in an entire agreement on the accuracy of every word in the left hand column herewith submitted.

I stood within a few feet of Mr. Lincoln during his delivery of the Address, in company with the Hon. Newton Bateman, the State Superintendent of Schools and J. H. Littlefield, a fellow law-student in the Lincoln and Herndon law office. After the Address we remained in the same position while the train then just starting, rapidly disappeared from us, on that somber February morning through its cold grey misty haze of rain and snow, until it passed beyond our view.

Slowly returning to the offices, Dr. Bateman was silent and very grave, Littlefield, who was a staunch Calvinist of the strictest type commented favorably at some length on Mr. Lincoln's words: "That Divine Being * * * who controls mine and all destinies", as being a credit to Lincoln's early Baptist teachings; and I, to lighten the depression we all felt at the parting and keep out of theology, remarked that Mr. Lincoln showed his apt political skill in qualifying his words, "affectionate farewell" that he extended to "friends", by adding his social good-bye recognition to the "neighbors", as well, for a large part of those "neighbors" he addressed were his strong political foes, holding their opinions with an intense display of bitter partisan prejudice. I mention this incident here as a memory corroborative of these words in the copy of the Address that I compiled from the short-hand notes that I made up a few days later, and these words being

EXHIBIT D

omitted from the Nicolay and Hay copy.

The other differences in several places between these copies, of one or more words, while of minor importance, are vital as examples of Lincoln's selection of words in his more studied compositions, and I think a close comparison by critical students of these words, in connection with the sentences where they appear, will prove the copy I made as more nearly presenting the Lincolnian style of thought.

As these were the first words spoken at the threshold of Lincoln's appearance in executive view as a Nation's Chief, it is important and vital to the memory of him who spoke them, that the utmost care be given to reproduce in this National Memorial the exact words Lincoln uttered on that fateful Feb. 11th, 1861.

I appeal most earnestly to the National Memorial Commission that they do not fail to carve these words of Lincoln's farewell to Springfield friends in enduring bronze and granite, for they embody, as we now see, a Nation's prelude, by its Chief, to the historic tragedy then ushering in, whose years of terrific strain and strife should at last end in the closer union of these reunited States. Both by this National Monument and this Heroic Statue, our country shall henceforth forever commemorate Lincoln's memory associated with the fraternal unity of all our States.

These words are no longer for the few he addressed, but - alike with him who spoke them,-they belong to the Ages.

(signed) HENRY B. RANKIN.

Springfield, Illinois,
August 9th, 1919.

Copied from "Personal Recollections of
Abraham Lincoln". By Henry B. Rankin, p. 223.

My Friends - No one not in my situation can appreciate my feelings of sadness at this parting. To this place and the kindness of this people I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children were born and one lies buried. I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested on the shoulders of Washington. Without the aid of that Divine Being who ever aided him, who controls mine and all destinies, I can not succeed. With that assistance I can not fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good let us confidently hope that all will be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you, friends and neighbors, an affectionate farewell.

Copied from "Abraham Lincoln": A History
by Nicolay and Hay, Vol. 3, p. 291.

My friends: No one, not in my situation can appreciate my feelings of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born and one is buried. I now leave not knowing when or whether ever I may return with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of the Divine Being, who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting him Him, who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

